

In the claims

1. (Cancelled)

2. (Currently Amended) A method for automating error processing and correction in legacy usage and billing systems comprising:

~~receiving at least one set of error processing rules in at least one master database to be executed by at least one processor and applied to a plurality of defective billing records;~~

receiving a plurality of defective billing records containing raw usage data sent from a plurality of client computer sites, each having legacy usage and billing systems, at a centralized server site, the centralized server site including a master database;

storing the plurality of defective billing records in the master database, the plurality of defective billing records having error codes;

~~receiving the plurality of defective billing records from one or more billing systems to the at least one master database;~~

~~categorizing the plurality of defective billing records by at least a defined error code;~~

~~presenting the categorized received billing records for an administrative review;~~

~~accepting ad hoc sets of error processing rules and administrative overrides;~~

applying one or more sets of ~~defined and ad hoc~~ error processing rules to the plurality of defective billing records to correct the billing records in accordance with error codes that are defined;

sending a warning when a defective billing record is encountered by the one ~~of~~ or more error processing rules that has an undefined error code; and

sending corrected billing records from the centralized server to the client computer sites that sent the defective billing records to their corresponding billing systems for further processing.

3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2 wherein a processing rule includes a description of the rule, a rule start date, a rule end date and a rule maximum rule duration.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3 wherein a processing rule is manually extended, modified, deleted and copied into a new rule.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2 wherein a warning is sent when a

predetermine threshold is met limiting the total number of records received from the one or more billing systems.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2 wherein processing rules are applied to individual errors and to classes of errors in a batch process.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2, further comprising balancing volume flows of defective billing records and sending a warning when an out of balance condition exists.

8. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium storing a plurality of instructions to be executed by a processor for automating error processing and correction in usage and billing systems, the plurality of instructions comprising:

~~receive at least one set of error processing rules in one or more master databases to be executed by at least one processor and applied to a plurality of defective billing records;~~

receive a plurality of defective billing records containing raw usage data from one or more billing systems of client computer sites to the one or more master databases of a centralized server site;

group the plurality of defective billing records by a defined error type;

~~present the grouped billing records for an administrative review;~~

send a warning when a defective billing record is encountered that ~~was~~ has an error code that is not anticipated by one or more sets of error processing rules;

~~accept ad hoc sets of error processing rules and administrative overrides;~~

apply the one or more sets of error processing rules to the plurality of defective billing records to correct the billing records; and

send the corrected billing records from the centralized server site to their corresponding legacy billing systems of client computer sites for further processing.

9. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 8 wherein a processing rule includes a description of the rule, a rule start date, a rule end date and a rule maximum rule duration.

10. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 9 wherein a processing rule is manually extended, modified, deleted and copied into a new rule.

11. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 8 wherein a warning is sent when a predetermine threshold is met limiting the total number of records received from the one or more billing systems.

12. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 8 wherein statistics processing rules are applied to individual errors and to classes of errors in a batch process.

13. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 8, the plurality of instructions further comprising balancing volume flows of defective billing records and sending a warning when an out of balance condition exists.

14. (Currently Amended) A device for automating error processing and correction in usage and billing systems comprising:

a usage errors database that receives defective billing records containing raw usage data from billing systems of client computer sites;

a corrected usage database that outputs corrected billing records to billing systems of the client computer sites that sent the defective billing records for further processing; and

a master database including at least one set of error processing rules and a plurality of defective billing records received from ~~one or more billing systems~~ the usage errors database; and
~~a processor in communication with wherein the master database and the usage and billing systems, the at least one processor categorizing the plurality of defective billing records of the master database by at least a defined error code, presenting the categorized billing records for an administrative review, accepting ad hoc sets of error processing rules and administrative overrides, applying~~ applies the one or more sets of defined and ad hoc error processing rules to the plurality of defective billing records to correct the billing records, and sending sends corrected billing records to the corrected usage database ~~their corresponding billing systems for further processing.~~

15. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 14, ~~wherein the processor~~ further comprising a user function that provides a graphical user interface and wherein the processor ~~user function provides~~ presents the categorized billing records for an administrative review via the graphical user interface.

16. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 14, ~~wherein the processor~~ further

comprising a function that sends a warning when a defective billing record is encountered by one or more error processing rules that has an undefined error code.

17. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 14, ~~wherein the processor~~ further comprising a function that sends a warning when a predetermined threshold is met limiting the total number of records received into the master database from the one or more billing systems.

18. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 14, ~~wherein the processor~~ further comprising a function that applies the error processing rules to individual errors and to classes of errors in a batch process.

19. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 14, ~~wherein the processor~~ further comprising a function that balances volume flows of defective billing records and sends a warning when an out of balance condition exists.

20. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 14, wherein an error processing rule includes a description of the rule, a rule start date, a rule end date, and a rule maximum duration.